

For Immediate Release December 9, 2015

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Chairman Lipscomb Critical of Senior Meal Site Closures
Abele Administration Moves to Close Five Sites

Milwaukee County Board Chairman Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., today criticized County Executive Chris Abele for his administration's decision to close five senior meal sites during the course of 2015 and early 2016.

The senior meal sites, at Bethesda Senior Center/Senior Dining Center, 2845 W. Fond du Lac Ave.; Project Focal Point Senior Center/Senior Dining Program, 811 W. Burleigh St.; Ascension Lutheran Church, 1236 S. Layton Blvd.; West Milwaukee Senior Center, 1345 S. 47th St.; and the Lakeside Senior Enrichment Program, 1410 N. Prospect Ave. have either closed during 2015 or will close by the end of the year.

Lipscomb said that although alternative sites have been offered by the administration, the new locations may present a hardship for many seniors if they do not have adequate transportation access to the new sites.

"These meal sites are crucial to making sure many of our seniors get proper nutrition," Lipscomb said. "Many seniors do not have access to nutritious food due to a lack of transportation or limited income. Accessibility to food is a basic human right, but the administration seems to think it is a luxury that the County cannot afford.

"The Executive put on the table \$80 million of public funding for a private sports arena for the Bucks, but at the same time is closing senior meal sites," Lipscomb said. "This is an indication of skewed priorities. If the administration believes the County can't afford accessible senior meal sites, then it needs to re-evaluate its values."

Additionally, the Board's Committee on Health and Human Needs learned today that the temporary appointment of the Interim Director of the Department on Aging expired Tuesday.

The Health and Human Needs Committee passed a resolution seeking to ensure that any meal site change come before the County Board for approval.

Supervisor Steve F. Taylor, who has toured all 29 meal sites, said any closure of a meal site "deserves the highest scrutiny."

"The Executive's failure to appoint a permanent director to the department and the ongoing closure of the meal sites raises questions about his commitment to aging services in Milwaukee County," Lipscomb said. "Is the Executive planning to close the Department on Aging at some point?"

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